

~~INFORMATION SECRET REPORT CONFIDENTIAL~~

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 14 December 1948

SUBJECT    Instruction Received by Slovak Press  
             Regarding Prohibited News Items

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DATE OF

**SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.**

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION FOR THE RESEARCH  
USE OF TRAINED INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE ACT 50 U.S.C. 31 AND 32. AS ADVERTISED, ITS TRANSMISSION OR THE REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED, HOWEVER INFORMATION CONTAINED IN BODY OF THE FORM MAY BE UTILIZED AS DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE RECEIVING AGENCY.

25X1 The following is a translation from Slovak of a circular sent by the Press  
25X1 Division of the Slovak Commissariat of Information to all chief editors in  
Slovakia, prohibiting the publication of information "jeopardizing the na-  
tional defense, internal security and public order, and international rela-  
tions of the Czechoslovak Republic".

## TRANSLATION

The Ministry of the Interior has sent us new memoranda pertaining to the publication of prohibited news items. The Ministry addresses special directives to the press. The memoranda will be made public following the enactment of the new Act Concerning the Safety of the Republic.

The Press Division of the Commissariat of Information wholeheartedly recommends to Messrs. the chief editors that they study the directives herein contained. It is in the interest of every editorial staff to avoid any difficulties which might arise as a result of their failure to abide by these directives. We are asking the chief editors to instruct all members of their staffs in an appropriate manner in order that there may be a guarantee that the directives appearing below will acquire a permanent character of a confidential nature.

In some publications - and especially in the provincial ones - there appear, from time to time, news items about matters which, from the standpoint of national defense, ought to remain secret because by their publication important interests of the Republic and public security are jeopardized.

As a rule, news items of this sort are published without any malevolent intent, such as, for example, the Two-Year and the Five-Year Plan propaganda items, or articles praising the successes of our productive efforts on the Over-Plan, or those praising "Stakhanovite" efficiency. Even though, as has already been mentioned, writers of such articles, as a rule, are not prompted by malevolence, such articles and news items may be very harmful, as they furnish the enemy with valuable intelligence material (for example, precise data about the installations and the productive capacity of some important armaments-producing establishments,

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or transportation facilities, railroad stations, airfields, etc.). Other news items may, again, seriously harm important interests of the domestic and foreign policy of our Republic and our allies.

Since it is assumed that the previously issued directives pertaining to the publication of prohibited information are not well known or accessible to all organs of the pressservice, the Ministry of the Interior considers it appropriate to call your attention to the following:

A. Information, the Publication of Which Is Prohibited In the Interest of National Defense:

According to para. 23 of the Act Concerning the Safety of the Republic, the publication in print of information about the strength, military efficiency, or movement of troops or other defensive military establishments of the Republic or its allies, when the publication of such information has been officially prohibited and is detrimental to the interests of the State, or the publication in print of information about exceptional measures taken in the interest of maintenance or re-establishment of peace and order, when the publication of such information has been officially prohibited, constitutes a breach of the law. The same infraction of the law is committed by anyone who transmits to an unauthorized person or publishes in print information about military treason, or about official investigation of or legal proceedings connected with military treason, prior to the publication or approval of publication of such information by the Ministry of National Defense or by competent military Headquarters.

In this category of information, the publication of which, according to para. 39 of the Act Concerning the National Defense, No. 131/1936, Codex, is subject to penalty, belongs also information about industrial establishments important for the defense of the Republic and about communication facilities (radio stations, postal facilities, telegraph, railroads, etc.) insofar as they are serving the interest of national defense.

According to subsequent executive orders (cf. the circular of the Ministry of the Interior, dated 9 December 1937, published in No. 287 of the Official Record /Uredni list/ of 12 December 1937 and the explanatory notes pertaining to this circular contained in the decree of the Presidium of the Ministry of the Interior, dated 9 December 1937, No. 4023, distributed among all the then provincial bureaus and offices) it is particularly prohibited to publish in print the following information about the following:

1. The strength, organization, extent of training and preparations of the Czechoslovak Armed Forces and their individual components; the results of military conscription; the movements of troops and material; personnel changes within the Armed Forces prior to their official publication; fortifications and other defensive establishments and preparations against enemy attack;
2. The changes or planned changes in the organizational structure of the Army or its armaments; Army exercises (maneuvers) in which tests of organization and armaments are conducted; any preparations for such changes (for example, the trips of Army officers abroad for the purpose of study);
3. The location and capacity of military dumps and warehouses, military training fields and camps, airfields and other establishments of the military administration as well as more detailed data about electric power plants and similar objectives whose operation or products are important from the standpoint of national defense; it is obvious that not even the names of such establishments may be published;
4. Existing or projected armaments - especially if their description and the results of tests are included - and the deliveries of materiel and raw materials to our Armed Forces, to a friendly or other State, i.e., it is not permitted to write about our deliveries of such materiel and materials to foreign countries;

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5. The postal facilities, telegraph, telephone, and, particularly, the installations of radio sending and receiving stations insofar as such information discloses the details of the measures and installations important for the defense of the State or facilitates enemy preparations for the destruction or crippling (by sudden raids, sabotage, or aerial bombardment) of central communications stations, transformer stations, long distance lines, and similar installations; photographs, especially photographs of the exterior of such installations, may not be published without the approval of the Ministry of National Defense;
6. The installations and equipment of important railroad lines or stations, freight transshipment stations, railroad line centers and other important railroad establishments; for example, no data about the maximum capacity of railroad lines, freight transshipment capacity of important stations and their technical installations - such as the number and arrangement of railroad tracks etc. - may be published; the same applies to major civilian airfields;
7. The planned and completed construction of roads and large bridges insofar as the publication of such information makes it possible to determine that such communication facilities are of military importance.

All the above restrictions applicable to the publication of information related to the Czechoslovak Armed Forces apply to information about the National Security Police (SNB), which, too, are organized on a military basis.

As far as the publication of information about the acts of military treason, or about official investigation of or legal proceedings connected with military treason, is concerned, it is necessary to adhere to the principle that only official releases of the Ministry of National Defense or of the Ministry of the interior, or news items approved by one of the Ministries may be published. Once the trial of a case of military treason has been started - and provided that the trial is conducted publicly - a report about the proceedings may be published without an official approval only if it is limited to the names of the accused, the enumeration of charges as they are formulated by the court or by the State prosecution, and the judgment of the court. The prohibition of publicizing information pertaining to acts of military treason applies particularly to the time period during which the official or court investigation is still in progress. All that has been said above in connection with the publication of information about military treason applies similarly to other criminal acts against the State (e.g., conspiracy against the Republic, disclosure of State secrets).

#### B. Information Jeopardizing the Internal Security and Public Order:

According to the provisions of the Act Concerning the Safety of the Republic and the subsequent penal codes (Article 2 of Act No. 140/1934, Codex; Articles VII and VIII of the Act. No. 8/1963, Empire Codex), the following acts constitute the factual basis of the breach of the law:

1. Attacks or inciting against the independence of its Republic, its unity and territorial integrity; against its popular democratic regime and its social and economic system; or against the national character of the Republic guaranteed by the Constitution;
2. The vituperation of the head of the State, the legislative body, the Cabinet of Ministers and its individual members, the Armed Forces, the courts, the National Committees and organs of popular government; in addition to verbal attacks, coarse and indecent caricatures belong in this category; factual, decent criticism of the conditions, public offices and persons is, naturally, admissible and, indeed, desirable;

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3. The advocating or inciting of national, race, or religious intolerance, or suppression or limitation of the liberties of the working class which are guaranteed by the Constitution;
4. The expression of approval of criminal acts, particularly those aimed against the State; very close to this category of criminal acts are the cases of publication of new items taken over from the foreign press or radio broadcasts, or the publication of information about the activities of foreign or enemy groups abroad, when it is apparent that the purpose of such reprinted news items is to inform the public and not to counter-act or deny such reports;
5. The spreading of panicky or untrue reports which could jeopardize the defensive capacity or security of the State, the military preparedness of the population, Czechoslovak currency, respect for the public authorities, public order and safety, or create economic chaos, or have other seriously disturbing effects;
6. The publication of articles about criminal acts committed against the State or articles about official or court investigations of criminal acts of any sort, whenever such publication could thwart or render difficult the successful result of such investigations; in cases of this sort, official releases ought to be awaited or the opinion of a competent security office requested; it is equally prohibited, before the conclusion of a court trial, to publicize opinions about the strength of the evidence material or speculative statements as to the possible result of the trial in such manner as to influence the public to anticipate a certain verdict;
7. The publication of information about the sessions of the legislative branch of the Government, of the courts, National Committees or organs of public administration if such sessions had been declared to be confidential; or the publication of official court documents without the knowledge of the appropriate public office or court.

C. Information Jeopardizing the International Relations of the Republic:

It is necessary to avoid the publication of information, the disclosure of which could have a harmful effect upon the good relations of the Czechoslovak Republic with its allies, particularly with the Soviet Union and the other Slavic countries.

It is inadmissible to vituperate, berate, or ridicule the allied States, their heads and representatives recognized by the Government of the Republic, or their symbols (flags etc.) even in such cases where a foreign publication is quoted.

Correctness attested by:

(illegible signature)

For the Commissar:

(signed:) Julo Horvath

END OF TRANSLATION

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